

WINC'S MISSION: ANIMAL CARE

A Mallard's Long Road To Recovery

This female Mallard was brought to us after she flew into a window and was stunned and not flying away. Fortunately, she had minimal trauma-based injuries from the window collision, aside from a sore shoulder. What we did find was much more worrisome - she was suffering from high levels of lead toxicity that needed to be addressed immediately.

Lead toxicity can happen from ingesting lead from the environment. Lead is a toxic metal, an environmental contaminant, and a nerve poison. Once ingested, the toxins enter the bloodstream; even trace amounts can be enough to cause seizures, organ failure, paralysis, and death. Although its use has been largely discontinued to protect humans, it is still used in fishing sinkers and ammunition, causing a threat to wildlife when it is left behind in the environment.

Luckily for this duck, it was caught early enough for this sweet girl to get the medical help she needed. She required multiple rounds of chelation therapy (a medical treatment, where we administer a medication that binds to heavy metals). The toxins bind to the chelating agent and are removed from the bloodstream, excreting it through urine and feces. While chelation therapy is helpful to remove toxins, it has other side effects like loss of appetite and dehydration. Due to this, she also required supplemental gavage feedings and injectable fluids to help her get through this.

After several rounds of treatment and a long 2-month stay in our care, she finally reached low levels of lead and was able to be released! We hope she stays safe and lead-free!

Story by Sara Imperl



2025 Issue 1: Inside This Edition

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Mission Statement

To provide wildlife rehabilitation to Wisconsin wildlife with the intent to release back to the native habitat, conduct research designed to further the positive impact of rehabilitation, and provide quality community education programs and service.

Wildlife In Need Center Board of Directors

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WINC's MISSION: EDUCATION

Welcome Fergus & Kasper

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Wildlife In Need Center Advisory Board

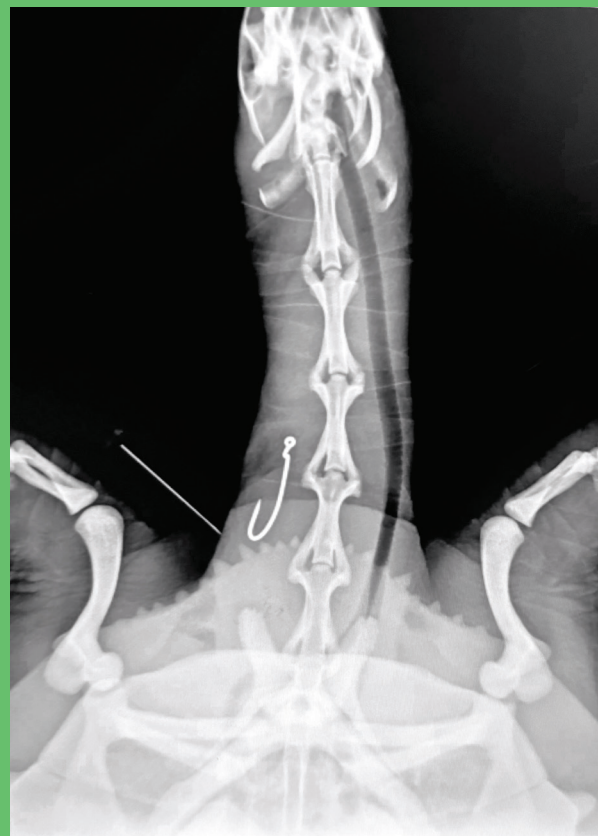
Holly Schlenvogt
Dean Pipito
Lou Banach

The Wildlife In Need Center is proud to welcome two new ambassador animals to our education team: Fergus, a Gray Tree Frog, and Kasper, a leucistic Virginia Opossum. Each of these animals is non-releasable due to permanent injuries or conditions that would prevent them from surviving in the wild. As ambassadors, they will now serve as representatives of their species in public education programs throughout the region.

Fergus was admitted to our rehabilitation clinic with damage to his eye that resulted in a less than ideal release situation. This visual limitation makes it difficult for him to hunt or avoid predators, eliminating the possibility of safe release. As a species, Gray Tree Frogs are native to Wisconsin and are often overlooked despite playing a key role in wetland and forest ecosystems. Their ability to change color based on temperature and background is a notable adaptation, and their adhesive toe pads allow them to cling to surfaces and move vertically through their environment. Fergus allows us to introduce these topics in a tangible

and accessible way during school programs and outreach events. Kasper arrived as a juvenile Virginia Opossum and was deemed non-releasable due to physical injuries sustained after being hit by a vehicle. She also presents with leucism, a rare genetic condition that reduces pigment in the skin and fur. While often confused with albinism, leucism does not affect eye color. Kasper's condition is uncommon in wild populations and would likely make her more visible to predators. As part of our ambassador team, Kasper helps address common misconceptions about opossums, including their ecological benefits such as consuming carrion, reducing disease vectors, and controlling pest populations.

Together, Fergus and Kasper strengthen our capacity to teach about native wildlife, biodiversity, and the impact of human activity on local species. Their presence supports WINC's mission to connect people with wildlife through education and are greatly appreciated members of the ambassador team! To meet them stop by for a visit, or schedule an animal program today.



WINC'S MISSION: ANIMAL CARE

Hook, Line, & Sinker

This Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle was brought to the Wildlife in Need Center after she was caught by people who were fishing. She had swallowed their hook which then became stuck in her esophagus tissue. In order for us to safely remove the hook she was sedated and an endoscope (a thin scope used to look at tissue inside the body) was used to find the hook.

Since many fishing lures are made to look like fish, they can easily be mistaken as a tasty meal by wild animals. Once ingested they can cause injury to animals' face, mouths, and GI systems. Animals may also become tangled in the monofilament line that is left attached to many of these hooks. This leaves them trapped, resulting in numerous injuries as the animal struggles to get free.

Please dispose of any fishing line, tackle or trash properly. If you see some in the environment, please pick

it up, even if it's not yours. These small acts make a giant impact for animals and save lives.

Due to the barbs on the hook, the hook had to be carefully pushed through her skin to cut the barbs prior to removing the rest of the hook. The laceration on her throat required sutures and she is currently being treated with antibiotics as she continues to heal. Thankfully she was brought in right after she had swallowed the hook, minimizing the damage done.

Her radiographs also revealed that she was gravid, with three eggs. While she was in care, she laid one of her eggs, which is now part of our turtle hatchling program. Every year we incubate hundreds of turtle eggs! Most of these eggs are harvested from mom turtles who do not survive fatal injuries, or they come from mom turtles (like this softshell turtle) that lay their eggs while healing in our care. All the eggs in our hatchling program

require a lot of delicate care from incubating, hatching, to release! Once hatched, they will be returned to mom's home territory.

Story by Cherish Hutchinson Streit

Want to do even more to support the Wildlife In Need Center?

Explore our Amazon Wishlist to see how you can directly help us care for our wild neighbors.

Simply scan the QR code below to view the list and make a difference today!



WINC'S MISSION: EDUCATION

Where Love and Learning Meet: Leucius & Lenny's Story

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of two of our beloved Opossum Ambassadors, Lenny and Leucius, sibling brothers that spent their lives at WINC as Education Ambassadors. They came to WINC as tiny, weak, emaciated orphans in need of help. After extended care from our dedicated staff and volunteers, they (eventually) grew into thriving, physically healthy adults.

They joined our WINC Education team in 2022 and quickly embraced their new role as education ambassadors, teaching people about their species and the importance of coexisting with local wildlife. Lenny, with his 'smile' and gentle, curious nature, won over everyone he met. Leucius's feisty personality and determination were an inspiration to everyone who knew him.

During their time with us, Lenny and Leu did 116 educational programs, reaching over 14,000 people. With the support of social media and news outlets, their work reached over 287,000 people, helping foster a new generation with a greater appreciation for these unique animals.



Sadly, Lenny lost a difficult battle with an abdominal tumor. Leucius, his handsome white "leucistic" sibling, bravely faced a different challenge — arthritis in his spine, which over time, limited his mobility.

Together, Lenny and Leucius were an incredible team. Through their work, they helped us dispel common myths about opossums and helped foster a greater appreciation for these unique and often misunderstood animals.

Rest in peace boys, you will be missed by many. ❤️

Story by Elisa Fosco



Become a Hero for Our Wild Neighbors

Join our Wildlife Animal Champions — a special community of monthly donors who help save wild lives all year long.

Your commitment keeps our wild neighbors safe, healthy, and free.

Learn more at www.helpingwildlife.org/monthly-donor-wildlife-animal-champions-member

or scan the QR code below.



SCAN ME

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hugs from Our Community, & from Us to You!

Summer has flown by, and once again, our incredible community has shown up for wildlife in need. From bringing in injured and orphaned animals to generously donating, your compassion continues to inspire us. Our Wildlife Education programs were a hit this season, children especially loved meeting our animal ambassadors and amazed us with their thoughtful questions and impressive knowledge.

Earlier this year, we said goodbye to a beloved friend, Mary Roberts, whom I affectionately called our "Godmother." Mary was a dedicated rehabber and a fierce advocate for every animal she rescued. She and her husband Tom were among WINC's most loyal supporters, giving their time, energy, and resources to our mission. Mary was reunited with Tom this past March, and we miss them both dearly.

This summer also brought exciting progress. We welcomed Jennifer Bloss, DVM, as our volunteer veterinarian. Dr. Bloss visits weekly, or as needed, to care for our patients, and her presence has paved the way for a major step forward: the development of an on-site surgical suite. This will allow us to



Erica &
Thomas DeMers (Board Chair)



Lou & Kim Banach (Executive Director)
with Abby & Kent Lorenz



Karen &
Christine Jeschke (Board VP)

provide timely, lifesaving care without the delays and costs of transporting animals to outside clinics, especially critical for our most fragile patients.

Of course, summer had its challenges too. In August, two of our four air conditioning units failed, leaving our exam room and avian nursery sweltering at 82°F. Staff placed ice cubes in water bowls to help orphaned songbirds stay cool. Thanks to your incredible support, we exceeded our goal to replace both units. Talk about hugs!

Looking ahead, tickets are now on sale for our October 18th Fine Wine and Dine event! Stay tuned for details on the online silent auction. This elegant evening features a five-course gourmet meal paired with wines, all curated by the chef at Westmoor Country Club. We hope to see you there!

A world without WINC is unimaginable, and your hugs remind us every day how deeply you care.

Story by Kim Banach



Dakota

SOCIETY

The Dakota Society is made up of generous individuals who have chosen to include WINC in their estate plans, ensuring their legacy helps protect our wild neighbors well into the future. For more information, contact Kim at kbanach@helpingwildlife.org.

A heartfelt message from one of our treasured Dakota Society members: "WINC's compassion and commitment to wildlife give me hope for the future. Including you in my estate plans is my way of ensuring that care and kindness will continue for generations to come."

13th Annual Fine Wine & Dine

Saturday, October 18th, 2025
from 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Westmoor Country Club



CHASE'S CORNER

July 10 my co-worker Kasper was on TV with channel 4's Morning Blend inviting the community to a fun-filled Summer Meet & Greet on Saturday, July 12 at WINC.

You can watch here:

<http://bit.ly/45uchna>

Executive Director Kim Banach went along too because Kasper can't drive. Kim said 18,000 people watched the program. I think their viewership might have been up because people wanted to see Kasper. And Kasper and I met lots of people at our Meet & Greet at WINC too. I don't like to brag, but I am kind of a local celebrity. I was on Morning Blend in January - you can watch me here:

<https://bit.ly/4fz15u2>

Now that school is starting soon, it's a good time to remind you that I and our other education team members can come visit your school, library, scout group or other groups. We have programs for pre-school students through senior citizens. We love to educate about wildlife in Wisconsin and tell

our personal stories. It's fun to see people, but the best part is that I get snacks while Kim talks. We have all the details on programs and how to request a visit on our website:

<https://www.helpingwildlife.org/educate/wildlife-education/>

We can come to your site, or you can come to WINC. We are available for booths at community events like Delafield's Night Out too which we recently attended. You can also have your birthday parties at WINC. You bring the cake, I bring the party! Someday I am going to get a taste of one of those cakes. I hope to see you soon at an education event!

Don't Forget Our Wild Neighbors

During Wisconsin's hot, humid summer days, fresh water can be a lifesaver for wildlife. Consider placing birdbaths or shallow dishes of water outside for birds and small mammals to safely drink from.

Become a Wildlife Animal Champion

Join our special group of monthly donors – Wildlife Animal Champions – and help us save wild lives all year long.

Support WINC While You Shop

- **Good Harvest Market (Pewaukee):** Bring a reusable bag and receive an EcoToken to donate to local nonprofits. For every token given to WINC, we receive 10¢.
- **Albrecht's Sentry (Delafield) & Piggly Wiggly (Hartland & Oconomowoc):** Bring us your grocery

receipts, and we'll turn them in for a percentage of the totals.

- **Kwik Trip Rewards:** Choose WINC to receive your rebate, and Kwik Trip will donate an additional 1% too!

Double Your Impact

Ask your employer if they offer a matching gift program for charitable donations.

Become a Wildlife Release Site

All adult patients return to the location where they were rescued, but young animals need a safe place to call home. If you or someone you know can provide suitable property, visit our website to learn more and fill out a release site form: www.helpingwildlife.org/rehabilitate/wildlife-release-program

What's the BUZZ? – Remembering Special People

This year, WINC has been touched by a heartfelt wave of gifts made in honor or memory of loved ones. These thoughtful tributes celebrate the lives and legacies of those who hold a special place in the hearts of our donors.

Simply scan the QR code to the right with your smartphone camera to visit our Remembering Special People webpage.



WINC'S TEAM: VOLUNTEERS

Volunteering At WINC Is Amazing!

Our positions are interesting, mentally stimulating, and often good exercise.

We have many different volunteer positions available. This is why we require prospective volunteers to attend a New Volunteer Orientation. They will learn about the different opportunities, the expectations of each, and decide which position is the best for them. Every position is very valued!

Animal Care Volunteers	Office Volunteers	Education Volunteers
Animal Care Assistants	Office Assistants* +	Maintenance Volunteers
Baby Bird Feeders**	Interns	Gardening Volunteers*

*Seasonal Position

*Available For People Under 18

In addition to our regular weekly volunteers, WINC also has special project volunteers. These people/groups either help with 1-time projects or make things at home and then bring them in. Recently we welcomed volunteers from Generac who helped deep clean and set up a large cage. Scout groups have made nest boxes and improved pathways. Students have helped clean and organize a variety of areas. Special group projects are always very appreciated!

When you come to volunteer at WINC, be prepared to learn a lot! Our volunteers spend much time training with knowledgeable and dedicated mentors to be successful in their new volunteer position. Everybody is constantly learning new things, including interesting facts about animals

Did You Know?

- *There are two kinds of Flying Squirrels in Wisconsin. There may be more Flying Squirrels than Gray Squirrels in our area, but we rarely see them because they are nocturnal.*
- *The Virginia Opossum has ten upper incisors - no other mammal in North America has more than six.*
- *Baby Mourning Doves put their heads in their parents' mouths to get food. This is the opposite of most songbirds and takes an expert to understand!*

WINC is an exciting place to volunteer! You never know what you will see or do, however it will be a fascinating experience! An additional benefit to volunteering with us is that you will meet many interesting people and very likely make some wonderful new friends!

We greatly appreciate all our dedicated volunteers! Everyone is essential to our success!



What's the Hoot?



Keep an eye on your inbox for our monthly *What's the Hoot!* newsletter – featuring inspiring wildlife patient stories, upcoming events, and important updates.

Not on the mailing list yet? Email Development@helpingwildlife.org to start receiving *What's the Hoot!* straight to your inbox.



Wildlife In Need Center

Stay Connected & Mark Your Calendar



contact@helpingwildlife.org



www.helpingwildlife.org



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Wildlife In Need Center
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2025

September 2025

Adult Volunteer Orientation

Sunday, September 14th, 2025
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM
Wildlife In Need Center

October 2025

13th Annual Fine Wine & Dine

Saturday, October 18th, 2025
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Westmoor Country Club, Brookfield, WI

December 2025

Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, December 2nd, 2025
All Day
Wildlife In Need Center

Holiday Meet & Greet

Saturday, December 6th, 2025
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Wildlife In Need Center

2026

April 2026

32nd Annual Banquet

Friday, April 17th, 2026
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
The Legend at Brandybrook, Wales, WI

Website



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Discover the latest news and upcoming events at WINC!
Just scan the QR code above to visit our website

Social Media



Stay connected with WINC!
Scan the QR code above to follow us on all our social media

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